

## IMPROVEMENTS AT LOCAL PLANT GENERATE CORPORATE-WIDE ATTENTION

**ABOUT AKER SOLUTIONS.** Aker Solutions is a 175-year-old global organization that supports the energy industry through a variety of subsea services. The facility located in Theodore, Alabama, began operations in April 2008. With around 120 employees, the plant manufactures umbilicals for subsea oil and gas exploration.

**THE CHALLENGE.** Since 2009, Aker has relied on the Alabama Technology Network (ATN), part of the MEP National Network™, for quality management system related services. When the Theodore plant participated in ATN's Lean Training and Implementation for Office and Administrative Processes in 2014, company executives from Norway joined in the project. The positive results gained the attention of James Altieri, site manager at the Theodore facility. Aker began to recognize a downturn in the oil and gas exploration industry in early 2015, and Altieri contacted ATN for assistance in identifying solutions to ensure the plant's future sustainability.

**MEP CENTER'S ROLE.** After an assessment and follow-up discussion with the plant manager, ATN Lean engineers began a multi-phase Lean Transformation at the Theodore facility, beginning with a half-day Executive Lean/5S Overview and Project Goal Setting course. 5S is a visual workplace organization tool that stands for Sort, Set in Order, Shine, Standardize and Sustain. Aker participated in five separate 5S kaizen events, each lasting two days and focusing on a specific area of the facility, including production areas, tool rooms and the testing facility. An innovation in 5S auditing utilizing an app (I-Auditor) streamlined the auditing process and eliminated all paperwork, and the company's activities noticeably improved the aesthetics of the testing facility area where all Aker customers visit. The changes brought cost-savings and encouraged new investments in the company. The Theodore plant obtained additional corporate funding for process improvements, and is adding a new position to the company: Lean Engineer.

"This is one of the best things that happened to our group in 13 years! When the VP of HSE Global visited, he said this was the best organized facility in Aker Solutions (global family). His positive comments supported adding to our budget for next year for process improvements, plus we are adding a Lean Engineer to our team."

-James Altieri, Site Manager / Senior Operations Manager

## RESULTS



Cost of savings: **\$12,000**



**\$150,000** investment



Retained **91** jobs; created 1 new job



Invested **\$717,900** in workforce practices and employee skills



Obtained **\$250,000** in corporate funding for process improvements

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